REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2 and 8 were previously canceled. Applicant now cancels claims 1, 3-7, and 9-20, and adds new claims 21-31. Support for the new claims can be found in Applicant's specification on page 2, paragraphs 13-17, as well as page 6, paragraphs 57-61.

35 USC §103 (Thompson and Williams)

The Office rejected claims 1, 3-7, 9-17, and 19-20 as being obvious over Thompson et al. (US 5441070) in view of Williams et al. (US 5956248). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, especially in light of the arguments below.

Applicant canceled 1-20, and thereby rendered the above rejections moot.

Regarding new claims 21-35, claim 21 requires a panel comprising a processor that operates software that correlates first and second fluid flows with the first and second payors, and Thompson fails to teach, suggest, or motivate that limitation. Thompson contemplates an apparatus for monitoring water use in a house that has a plurality of sensors, with each sensor coupled to a relay switch. The relay switches are coupled to a master switch that controls a main shutoff valve. Thus, when water flows in a pipe, the flow activates the coupled relay switch, which in turn activates the master switch to open the shutoff valve (Abstract; Fig. 1; C5/L49-68; C7/L42-68). There is no indication that Thompson contemplated correlating first and second fluid flows with the first and second payors.

Thompson also fails to teach, suggest, or motivate (a) a panel having a network interface to allow the panel to communicate with a remote user, and (b) the panel comprising a memory configured to store information regarding the first and second fluid flows and input received from the user interface. At best, Thompson discusses using a counter that counts the number of times a flow sensor is activated (C4/L21-24).

The combination of Thompson and Williams similarly fails to teach, suggest, or motivate these limitations. Williams discusses an irrigation controller having a microprocessor that stores and executes a watering program (Abstract; Fig. 8; C2/L47-53). Williams fails to teach, suggest, or motivate a panel that operates software configured to correlate first and second fluid flows with first and second payors, as the Williams device is designed to control irrigation. In

addition, while Williams discusses storing various water programs (Abstract; C1/L42-45), Williams fails to teach, suggest, or motivate a panel comprising a memory configured to store information regarding the first and second fluid flows.

35 USC §103 (Thompson, Williams, and Papadopoulos)

The Office rejected claims 12 and 18 as being obvious over Thompson et al. (US 5441070) in view of Williams et al. (US 5956248) further in view of Papadopoulos et al. (US 6061603). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, especially in light of the arguments below.

Applicant canceled 12 and 18, and thereby rendered the rejection moot.

Regarding new claims 21-31, Thompson and Williams fails to teach, suggest, or motivate all of the limitations of claim 21. The addition of Papadopoulos fails to remedy these defects.

Request For Allowance

Claims 21-31 are pending in this application. The applicant requests allowance of all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,
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